

Central Piedmont Community College Vol. 1, No. 2 Summer Quarter, 1977

The
Paul
Atwell
Memorial
Literary
Magazine
Galley 2

CPCC
033
1977
Vol.1
No.2

Graphics

Ron Walters

Theresa Ribsby

Kerry Brown

Lisa Brown

Cover photo by J. Fortner

M. Sovacool

Editor—Joseph Sovacool
Co-ordinator, Faculty Advisor—Darrell L. Gray

**All rights are reserved by the writer or the artist. No reproductions
should be made without permission from the originator of the work.**

**A Central Piedmont Community College Student Publication.
Office of Student Activities, Ross C. C. Surphlis, Director of Student Activities;
Darrell Gray, Manager, Student Publications.
Central Piedmont Community College, P.O. Box 4009, Charlotte, N. C. 28204**

BE

by Paul Atwell

Before I begin an explanation of a philosophy that I can endorse, I would like to consider an attitude that I must reject. Too often my colleagues and I discuss students as if they were "the enemy," a group to be conquered, disciplined; sometimes I detect a note of victory in the tone of voice instructors use in describing a disciplinary measure; often we need to substitute a lament of defeat for the victory tune, for although we have triumphed in refusing to allow the student credit for inferior work, there has been an ultimate defeat—the student's needs have not been met. I do not mean to imply that the instructor is solely responsible (sometimes he is not even partially responsible) for the failure, but the failure exists, and I insist that much of the failure to reach objectives with the student stems from an undercurrent of regarding the student as an enemy—to be disciplined, programmed, subjugated. Compounding the problem is the tendency of the student to pre-judge the teacher as "the enemy," and much that he has encountered through his school career justifies his evaluation. I am suggesting that one of the attitudes we need to check constantly (self-examination) is our attitude toward students. We need to remind ourselves constantly that a rejection of our subject matter, class attendance rules, theme deadlines, etc., is not necessarily a rejection of us as people; the people whom we teach have other problems, and I sometimes believe "teacher paranoia," one of our worst enemies, stems from an exaggerated estimation of the impact we have or should have.

In moving to a more affirmative expression of philosophy, let me suggest that one key to an affirmative philosophy is constant blasting of the attitude of one teacher that the student is an enemy or the attitude of the student that the teacher is an enemy. I believe the most successful blasing device an instructor can use is substitution of the word *people* for the word *students*. We are not qualified as social workers, psychologists, or psychiatrists, but we are qualified as human beings to form a relationship that places the humanness of the people in our rooms above the substance we teach. (I remember an incident in a fine novel *Them*; in the novel, written by Joyce Carol Oates, a former teacher, a character accuses Miss Oates of liking the characters in the works she teaches better than she likes the students in the classroom.)

Another device that can blow-up (or at least damage) these attitudes is an emphasis on the *Now* of the student. When I use this word, I do not intend to imply a study of contemporary events. When I refer to *Now* oriented teaching, I am referring to directing our teaching toward the present, the moment when people are in our classes. To aim for a goal the majority of the people in our classes will never reach (a four-year institution, a specific future career) has some merit, but we can still achieve this goal and our program will be more effective if we subordinate

these distant goals. The people we are teaching are *living* now (and too many of them have been so carefully programmed that *they* seem unaware of this fact). The people we are teaching are concerned with *Now*, and a beginning course in composition must find techniques which will allow them to reach into the experience of *Now* and communicate about that experience. A beginning course in composition must find ways to convince the people who are in the course that their experiences are valuable enough to communicate. Granting the fact that all of us are required to write when we do not wish to write does not invalidate the thesis that the best writing we receive will come from people who have been made aware of the depth of their experiences and have been stimulated to write from that experience. The person who teaches English 1304 must guard against regarding these techniques as gimmicks or tricks which will enable us to bait the student into writing well. Such an attitude will create justified resentment and reproduce the old "enemy" syndrome.

The most important factor in creating the awareness and the stimulation I have described is the instructor. Just as the 1304 course should emphasize the *Now* of the student, it should emphasize the *Now* of the instructor. The instructor can help achieve the two objectives I have described if he will *Be* in the classroom. I insist that nothing can substitute for an instructor who allows himself, his BEING, to permeate whatever it is he is teaching. (To explain more clearly what I mean by *BE*, I will digress into philosophy: in a conversation with a colleague, I encountered the following assertion: "I am not sure of where I'm going, but I don't think that's important; I am not sure of where I am, but I don't think that is important; I do think it is important to know where I've been." I disagreed, and my rationale has a bearing upon the philosophy of *Now* and *Being*. In my reply, I stated, "I don't know where I'm going, but that's not important; I don't know where I've been, but that's not important; I don't even know where I am. What is important is that wherever I am I *BE* there.")

"Nin is dead,"
Bonnie said.
"I read it in
this morning's news."
"Nin who?"

The students go on talking
while I go circling
the room distributing
the memorial magazine.
What should she
 could she say?

—Anais Nin . . .
 woman writer . . .
 famous for diaries?—

Describe her, Bonnie.
Define her.
(No wonder obituaries
 are short.)

I want to turn, to ask
 if they ever feel
 how deaths converge
 on days like this.
But the question freezes,
for today—just two quarters
later—a student flips
through the magazine,
glances at the picture
of Paul on the cover
and asks, "Atwell,
who was he?"
And I, not Bonnie,
 grope for words

Irene Honeycutt



COUNTRY SUMMERS

by Lucille Thompson

The Fair

Here comes Mrs. Cluck again with those old chicken feedbags. About once a summer she gets chicken food in those colored cloth bags and tries to sell Grandmo some feedbag material to make me a dress for the town's big Fair. Well, they do come in lotsa pretty patterns, and Grandmo usually ends up buying some to make drying towels or a couple of aprons . . . but a dress for the Fair—no sir, not me! I'd be afraid some rooster'd be sniffin' me all the way out and back. Burl and Arliss, Maynard's sisters, go to the Fair in matching feedbag dresses, but I usually bring some of my city dresses and an extra one for my best friend Dottoy Barns in case she wants a change 'cause the Fair, if it doesn't rain, lasts three nights. About the hardest thing getting ready for the Fair is putting on shoes. After running around all summer barefoot, my feet spread out so far that it's tough getting my fancy, black patent shoes back on my feet. Dotty Barns agreed, but she couldn't make up her mind whether to wear shoes or to just wait until September when school starts to go through the ordeal of getting into them again. Of course, you do have to get dressed up to go to Sunday School and church on Sundays, but we usually take our shoes off after the service when we follow Grandmo, Dotty Barn's mother, a few cousins and Rachel, the preacher's wife, around the graveyard back of the church while Grandmo points out the relative's tombstones. Sometimes she likes to freshen up the flowers on a couple graves or just prays fast and weeps a few minutes beside Grandpa's grave. Never do see Grandmo cry, but I'd spot her taking a hanky out of her feedbag apron to wipe away a few tears when she thought about Grandpa. Dotty Barns told me that one day while shellin' peas she overheard her mother telling Dillie Morrison and Maynard's mother that Grandmo could've gotten herself another beau but that she just never found herself anyone "quite like Grandpa".

Well, the summer's giant event was finally here. The town was all excited. Dotty Barns hollered at me from the front porch to "hurry up" and that she had picked a couple sprigs of lily-of-the-valley for our hair. Lilies-of-the-valley always smell so good and since Grandmo thought we were too young for perfume and lipstick, well, this kind of did the trick. The Fair grounds weren't far—right smack in the middle of the firehouse and the old Methodist Church. But, we wanted to leave early so we could get in line for some of that fantastic chicken corn "sup" that was always served in the church hall (no one could ever say "soup" up here at Grandmo's). Dotty Barns did remind me that on the way we had to pass Junior Rice's house and that he'd probably be rockin' on the front porch, as usual, watching the girls parade by his house. She said he always had funny ideas and, you're not kidding, with what he did to fat Mary Jean in the back end of Frank Farmer's truck. We quickly got in the chicken-corn-soup line, polished off two bowls apiece and heard the preacher's wife leading the crowd in "God Bless America." (Always would make Grandmo mad that the preach-

er's wife usually won the blue ribbon in the canned goods contest—last year it was pickle relish. Grandmo said it was “fixed” but that she couldn’t fight with God. Dotty Barns said that’s the reason Grandmo never comes to the Fair—she was just mad). The band hit it off with “Turkey In the Straw” (Maynard filled in with his guitar one or two nights) and kept on playing well past midnight. Everyone stayed right to the end, too. Babies just about born were out in the night, mountain air—just pushed around in “baby buggies,” some half fallin’ out and sound asleep. Mom never could understand how they could keep those little things up so late—just wasn’t healthy or right in that cool country air. But everyone was at the Fair (except Grandmo, of course) so who could baby sit. Country folks just don’t think about the same things as city people. (And, naturally, Grandmo wouldn’t sit since she’d have a fit missin’ the news broadcasts or some of her favorite radio programs like “Baby Snooks” or wondering what could happen next to Fibber McGee’s closet. She just liked to keep up on stuff).

Anyway, Dotty and I lost a lot of our summer savings at the Wheel of Fortune until we finally won a teapot and matching cup and saucer to add to her last year’s treasures. Maynard pitched some rubber rings over a couple of fancy canes to take home, and Bonita was all excited about her new Parcheesi Game she won at the Bingo table. Bonita said she’d come up tomorrow after lunch and she, Dotty Barns, Grandmo and I could play a few games. I didn’t really mind, but Bonita was a poor loser (Grandmo said it was because she had all that red hair) but—really—Grandmo was the poorest loser. You should see Grandmo puffin’ on her Wing cigarettes and shakin’ those dice . . . you could hear them rattle all the way across the street at Mrs. Cluck’s house. Dotty said Parcheesi made Grandmo bloodthirsty . . . whatever that means.

Well, tomorrow evening would bring us all together again for the fun. It was time to leave. I took off my shoes and several of us started walking towards the Square on our way home . . . Dotty and I thought that just *maybe* Junior Rice might be still rockin’ on the front porch . . . we giggled . . .

ONABUS

Sittin ona bus I'm sittin onabusjus
Sittin onabus wonchasitonabuswifus
Steerem widda sterem widda
Steerem widda stick
Nowm ridn onabus yes ridin onabus
Mownhollywood bus woncharidealongwifus
Onabus onabus wifus (wif us)
Broke up in History class—prof was calling
Role roll jerden
Is there a Mister Rash? Mister Rash,
Mister Ronny Rash? Haw Haw
Now fots funny bowdat?
Sittin at FiPints Sittin at FiPints
Steerem widda steerem widda stick
ALTOGETHERNOW
Car broke downmacar broke down (broke down)
Hossa madda U-car? Hossamadda
Hossamadda.
Jeezes is the door, is the onlies door
Iyes is the door (the door he says)
Jeezes is the door, is the onlies door
(Sez so)
Heezda O-ridge-anal-dough (sez so)
Ognob Murd

"COMING DOWN"

Jim Hughes

This is the most extraordinary part. I'd always wondered what they meant by "There's no way down," and now the weight of that warning is being driven into a crack in a mountain in Wyoming. The sound doesn't ring solidly, and as the cartilage, cold in my wrist, reluctantly absorbs the shock from the hammer, I realize another piton is in order.

"I'll have one more."

Below, my partner pulls from his belt a wedged chunk of metal one size larger than the last one he tossed me. More the mountain goat than I, he must have learned long ago the importance of that warning. As my mentor it is his duty to impart its significance to me. I wish now his philosophy ran counter to the adage, "Experience is the best teacher." It freezes in the rock. We climb.

"I'll have another."

Sometimes it's possible. Sometimes we can go all the way back by the route of ascent. But not here. After an exhilarating period of free climbing where auxiliaries aren't necessary, when the eyes grip the rock well in advance of anxious feet, the placement of the first chock simultaneously bruises the ego and strikes home the crushing realization that toes can't plan the descent, that no imaginary juxtapositioning of feet and head can surmount that evolutionary mandate, "Going up is easier than coming down." And the paradox, when accepted and embraced by mountaineers, may induce that serene gaze in their eyes. The only way down is up.

Almost there.

"Just one more."

Suspended now, from the bottom of the overhang at the pinnacle, I need only execute one or two strength and daring maneuvers to crown the event. My hand slides over the ridged surface and finds sanctuary in a knuckle deep pocket. All hangs on the coordinated shifting of energies from my former to new grasps. Like rolling a ball from one hand, up my arm and across my shoulders to the other, I let the power flow. A spasm twitches my wrist.

The glass shatters.

"You okay, Mr. Hughes?"

"Yeah, bartender. I need just one more."

THE HEBREW ADVOCATE
Black Poetry & Essays

—The impaled one—
The quiet one sleeps—with prior—
foremost proclamations of so many Ceasars.
Decided—Not To Hang Him—or impale Him
Yet the brave noble prince
Says—Render to Ceasar—Render to Jehova.
The Epitome of dying Christs has been
So Epitomized—with so many examples—
Yet to you with so many quests . . . still . . .
The echoing heat of ferment—desired yet . . .
Who would Heed.
Or Sow a Seed.
To Love. . . .
Some will see the examples
For the Quiet one yet
Sleeps.
'Tis ferment in his bosom.

William Alford

Hatteras Island Surf

The ocean looms
 precarious, uncertain,
threatening man's trifling body,
tossing it like a bird or a leaf
whirled on the unruly wind.

This schizophrenic surf—
 subtle, tempestuous,
 frolicksome, deadly—
shifts moods without warning.

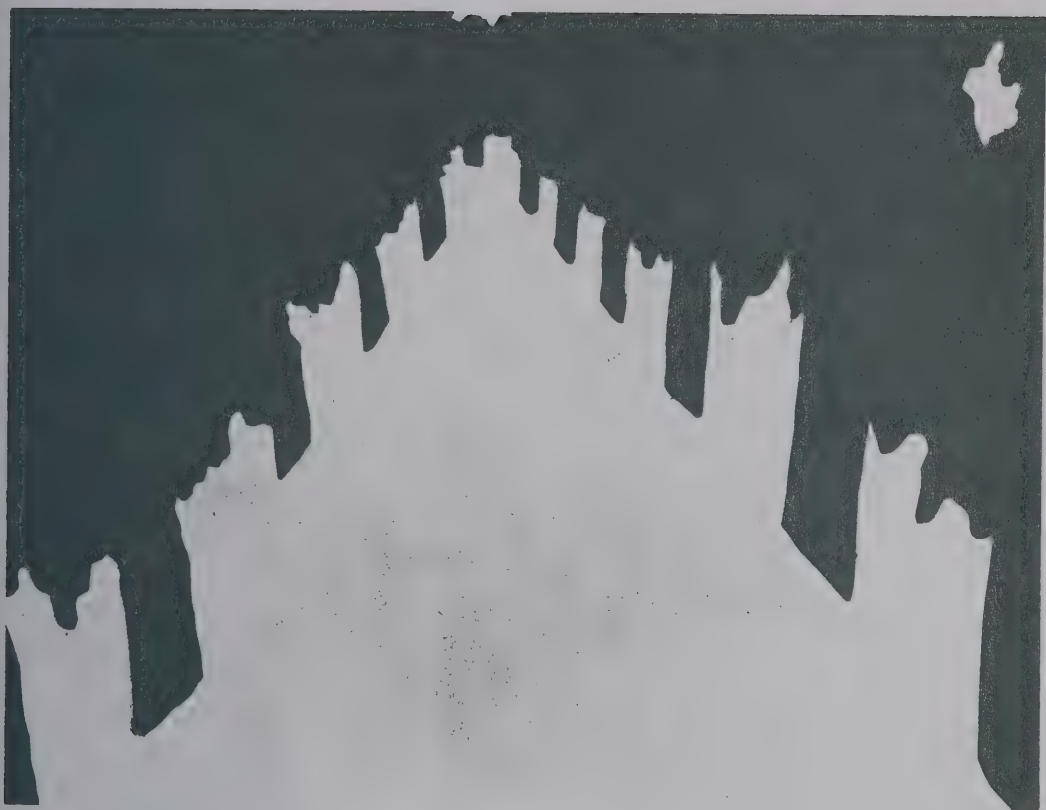
Warm and caressing it transforms
into a liquid mass of overwhelming
 action
becomes a roaring, powerful wall of water
 rising
 falling—
an uncontained monster!

In a flash the gray world collapses;
the sea lies down,
 blue and sparkling,
lapping curvaceously at the beach.

Who could resist its merry moods?
Swishing invitingly, flirtatiously,
playfully, it beckons . . .

We splash, and kick, and float—
 our spirits buoyant.
Fragmented seashells, a thousand scalpels
 cut our city feet.
We scoop our round buttocks
 into the gritty sand
where the ocean washes the shore.
Warm water immerses us,
fetal fluid protects us
 from the scorching sun.

We ride the crest of the crashing, roaring surf:
 tiny children on a gigantic serpentine slide,
 propelled like human missiles,
 united in cosmic delight,
 floating on a vast moving universe,
 whirling through sun rays and foam—
like the first minute specks of energized life.



A FRACTURED FAIRY TALE

by Donald L. Harding

Once upon a time, oh about three years ago in the city of New York, there lived a young blood named Jack Daniels. Now, Jack lived in the projects on the west side of Brooklyn on North East Street with his thirty year old mother. (Jack was twenty by the way.) Anyway as the story goes, Jack was a nut about chevys. In fact, he was born in the back seat of a 43 Custom. And from then on he had been madly in love with chevys. And today Jack was going to get his dream come true. He had stolen hub caps and pushed dope from day one to get a 56 Belair. There was one at Sam's Shady Sales and Service. And after putting his "X" on the dotted line it was all his. And what a car it was. It was aquamarine and primer gray! Just what Jack wanted. He couldn't wait to get it home. But as soon as he walked in the door his mother yelled out, "Jack, today is the first, go down to the post office and get my welfare check." So off Jack went to the post office. On the way back Jack saw that he was about to run out of gas. So he pulled into a gas station. As always, it was a self service gas station. The problem was Jack couldn't read how to work the gas pumps. But he was in luck, about that time he saw his old friend Paul, the pusher. "Hey Paul, come here," Jack yelled. Paul saw him and came running. "Hey man want to buy some "Reds" man"? I have some great "Reds," what about some "Downs" man"? "No thanks," Jack said. "I just want you to show me how to work the gas pump." "That's easy," Paul said. "You just turn it on." "Oh," Jack replied. Then Paul reached into his pocket and pulled out a small bag of pot seed. "Hey man, look what I have here, magic pot seed." "Magic seed, are you crazy," Jack said. "And they can be yours for five dollars." Paul replied. "But the only money I have is my mother's welfare check, see." Jack showed him the check. "That's cool," Paul said, "give it tot me and I'll give you the difference tomorrow." Jack did and they went their own ways. But the second he walked in the door at home his mother yelled out, "Where is my check"? Jack handed his mother the seeds. "And what is this"? "It's not my check, where it it," she demanded. "I got these magic pot seeds with it," Jack said. "You did what? That was my track money, I was going to put it on Miss Two Socks in the fifth," she roared. "I know what I'm going to do, I'm going to sell your car," were her next words. Jack started yelling, "No, No." But it was all in vain. She was already going out the door. And as she went, she threw the seeds out a window. Little did Jack know, they had fallen into a flower box three stories down. He was too upset over his 56 chevy. He just started to cry, then ran to his room where he cried himself to sleep. The next day much to Jack's surprise, he saw a giant pot plant growing by his window. He went over to take a look to see this giant pot plant growing at least ten feet into the smog and smoke. Jack just stood there looking at the plant as it grew so far into the smog he couldn't see it any more. Then he thought, if I get the leaves from the tops and sell them, I can get my chevy back. So in a flash up the plant Jack went. He must have climbed for at least seven hours before he came out of the smog. "Hey," Jack said, "this smog is so thick I bet I can walk on it." So Jack took a small step for man, and a giant leap for mankind. "It's like walking on marshmallows," Jack thought to himself. It was not long till Jack

came to a giant house. It was so big that he just walked under the door. After coming in he just stood there looking at all the giant things, table, chairs, roach clip, etc. Then he heard something, music, but where was it coming from? He went to investigate. As he came around a corner he saw a young chick smokin' a joint and getting down to Billion Dollar Baby. When she saw him she about flipped. "Hey man, you better get out of here and fast. If the giant sees you you'll be as good as dead!" "What giant," Jack replied. "Why, The New York Giant, what other giant is there in New York?" she said. "I don't care," Jack said. "All I want to do is smoke one with you." "Sounds cool," the chick said, so they lit up a big joint of gold. About that time the door swung open and in walked the giant. She must have been two hundred feet tall. Then she said, "Fe, Fi, Fo, Fom, I smell pot, and I want some." Jack took one look and ran out the door as fast as he could go. But it was all in vain, the giant took three good steps and grabbed Jack up in her left hand. "Now little man, give me all your grass, then I want a flick of your Bic." Jack did as he was told. The giant rolled the biggest joint Jack had ever seen. Then the giant went to light it. But when she did Jack's Bic broke. "Now what am I going to do," the giant remarked. "Oh, the torch on the side of my house." She took the torch in her right hand and started firing up the big joint. About that time Jack saw that the giant was wearing a wedding ring. It had a diamond in it as big as a watermelon. Jack knew what he could do with that. He could get his 56 chevy back. So he got out his switch blade and cut the stone out of its mount. Then with all his might he stabbed the giant in the hand with his knife. "Yaww, Ouch," the giant yelled, throwing Jack and the diamond from her hand. Jack got the stone and started running toward the giant pot plant. When he got there the young chick was waiting on him. "What took you so long," she said. "No time to explain," Jack replied. "Let's split." So down the plant they went. About two hours later they both wanted a joint. So Jack started cutting off the leaves. Then he looked up and saw the giant coming down after them. "I'll get you!" she yelled. So down the plant Jack and his girl went. Then without warning, the giant got to the place where Jack had cut off the leaves. She couldn't hold on, off she went. Down, down, down she went into the Hudson River. There was so much pollution in the water that it turned the giant into stone. So the people of New York pulled the giant out and put her on a small island to show people what would happen if they went swimming in the Hudson River. You can see her there to this day. Standing there still with her torch in her hand. And well, Jack got his 56 chevy back. Then he and his girl moved to the Rockies where they had a son and named him John Denver.

AT DUSK

Dark river
Flowing outward to nowhere
Massive waves
Thundering reverberations from shore to shore

Dark river
Hiding those stones thrown by lovers
Tide
Washing the sand away—the sand formed by two
People on the beach

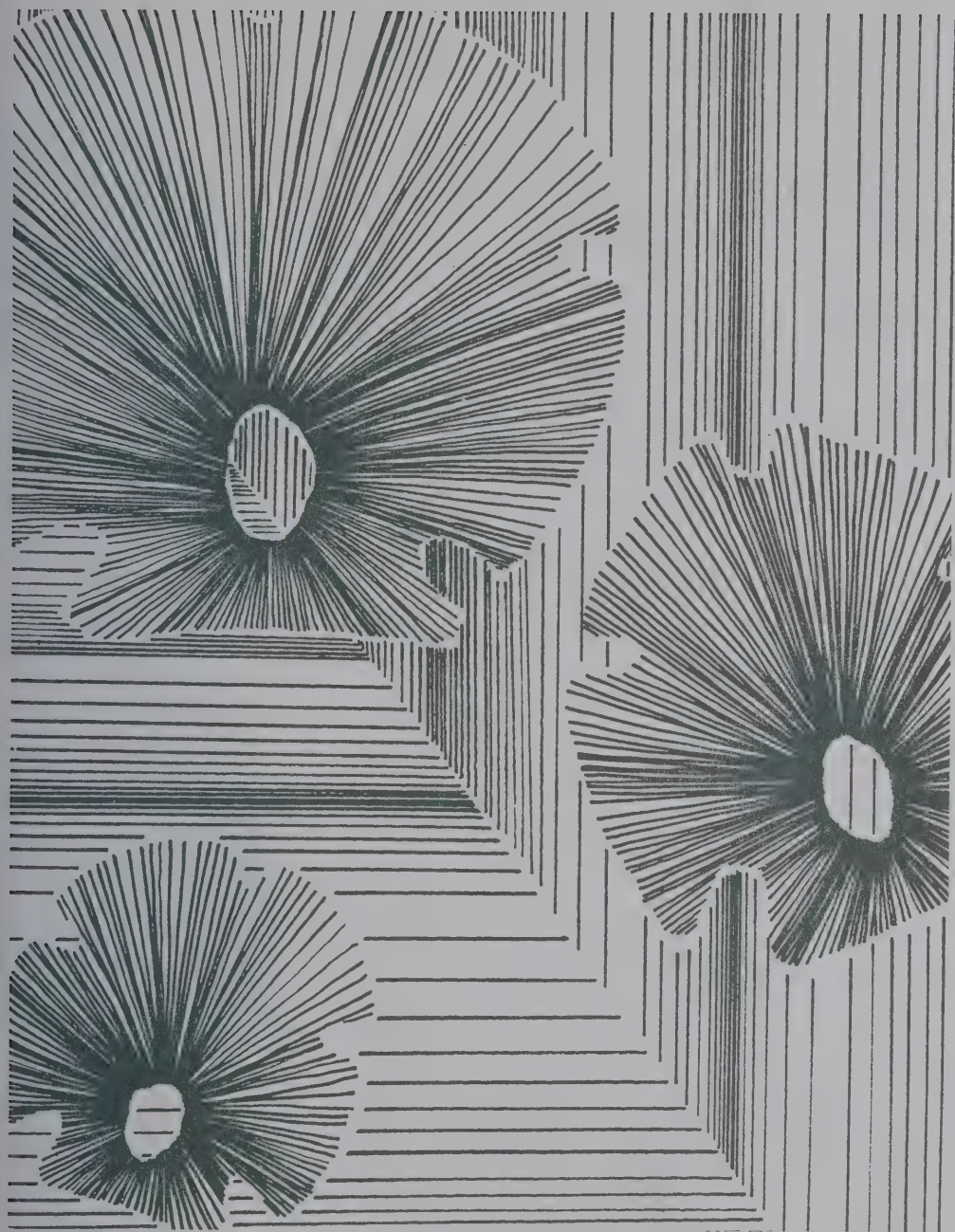
Dark river
Engulfing a barge
Deep
Waters holding time and shadows
Standing
Like a soldier at attention
Still

R. T. Harris

The Guru to the Dying Thief

Shed but a single tear, my son,
O'er dreams that could have been.
When your last hope this world's undone,
New visions wait beyond the glen.
For as the sun sinks from the sky
To burnish foreign night,
The day at times for us must die
While others know the light.
But sunrise never fails to come
Nor life, begin anew.
Just so our thirsting souls succumb
To brighter morning's dew.
Then patient wait 'til night has gone
'Til tides resign the shore,
And in the cleansing light of dawn,
You'll live again—to dream once more.

Daniel Rudolph Smith



LANCE MOHAMMED

—the price of atmosphere—

A bottom log in the fire,
its coals arranged its length
like leopard's spots, flashing
radiant energy its spectrum
designation blinks like an out of
order neon sign.
Plastic breathes on the windows
Inhale mammothly, tightening,
a whistle on the roof
Exhale: vapid.

The draft is evidently through
the wall.

—bees to honey—

like bees to honey
i'm drawn to company
isn't it odd
isn't it mod
a mod list a hiptionary

the growling fire complains
of the cold

where are you my dear
i'll love forever

it warms again in spring
it is bearable in summer
and without you

CONTE ARTICULUM

In a listen of an instant
Before the slow experiment of time
What god shaped or spun
His mortal clay sacred to profound?
What diety fueled with dust
Confronted his now narrow triumph—
A wound of mud thrust from earth
By trusting vortex—defiant
And erect with thumbled ambition,
Animus no less than himself?
Though blind to angels, still above,
His creation stalked with tallow stealth,
Mired too quick in shallows of rite,
The soft wick sputtered, unsparked by wind.
A candle withered under siege of dusk,
Drenched in ignorance by tandem brine.
Confined in the furious melt of doubt
He ranted the radiance of falling youth,
And hollowed faded victory to a shell
Of night and painless substitute.
The clamors who ascended to numb acclaim
Rose with formula's sweet, piled spike and garb
Their face brew a luminous foam, a fabric
Over innocence, congealed in stars.
Dull cloth lust wove by vague proportion
To provide the range of doubled flesh
Drawn upwards, until limit extinguished
All brilliance born in warp and woof of ash.
They, void soon, certain inheritors,
Desperate for illumined breath
Bartered heat through contagious scapegoat
To weigh out fire by measured dearth.

In vigilant sin the fire thief had chosen
A grief of goals, or fragrant peace,
Resilient as the moon, as slow as fate.
Beyond the margin of ordered sleep
Loamy intention's granite oath
Plucked ignition by longing's rub.
Until hour clad, the demon-paled horizons
Draped the curdling sky with blood.
We condemned the bringer of gloved brightness
Laid him love low by ice like beseech,
Yet out of the light of his liver pulled loins,
The rimed flame sprung on the tethered perch.
Armed with assurance, terror attends. Nocturnal,
The friction of flesh in prolonged ruin
Hendered by a talon honed swift as a torch
Reveals a cloister more secret than shame.
True enemies inhabit there, ten
Times greater than man or place.
With snare of scorn, jab of volition
Darkness lingers promising release.
Pinions rage a carrion breeze,
Blades of slander and imagined consequence.
We fledged our raw desolation.
Prometheus, in several countenances,
Who glowed constant in our regard
Irrespective of cult or station
Lies almost forgotten or almost legend.
Though death is not dichotomy, the god's season,
Fixed by step and moonlight's end,
Bends now in fatal friendship. As we
Who abhorred laughter at every inch
And sought combustion at every aim,
Found no goal but for silence.

Lynwood Sawyer



Sasquatch Watch

Dull blue gleams
 on lenses and rifles
Pitiless toys
 painful reminders
Coffee 'round the campfire
 helicopter roundup
 the narrowing noose
You squat, hairy prizefighter archetype
Peer through the trees
 punchdrunk from endless running
Remember fields and the sun on the sea
Curse the cliffs that hide you.
Radio crackle
 whiskey from a bottle
And the men in the mackinaws laugh
 just like shooting ducks
You squat, black like a banished shadow
Gnaw your knuckles
 remember the old tales
Remember the old friends gone
 ancient enemies upon you
You'll never know their hate
 a late development
Your curiosity can't encompass murder
You squat, homeless and alone
And wait for your cousins to kill you.

K. W. Moak

Pondscum

Prone, green gelatin of foetor
 undulant in pea soup dreams of glory
Blancmange for saurians
 color-blind and scaly,
 insensitive
You entrapper of bubbles, capturer of herbal detritus
In almost fecal splendor
 alive and pullulant
Like cast-off kleenex of frogs
 floating,
 tinted by amphibian snot.
 K. W. Moak

visiting

i hear car doors
pulling open
like sucks on
nippled bottles
and i hear shifting coats
and packages
and feet
and eyes

i hear telephone drama
and mastercharge mantras

i hear them discussing
the baby
the bills
the balls of chinamen
paved under north korean
roads

i hear television buzz
and continuous sales pitch
glowing colorfully at me from
the corner
and feet propped up
all around

i hear the d-string
flat
out of tune on her
sears six string
straddling a gallon of
the cheap stuff

i hear excuses for
motherhood
and career motivation
and insurance
and god

i hear windows shutting
pulling the weights
dick roberts, jr.

THE PROPER STATE OF MAN

We are bubbles, on the Lake.
A waterdrop for skin,
With a mouthful of atmosphere within.
Reflections of the sky
Chase across our faces.
Clouds drift by,
In wind-driven races.
We are bubbles on the Lake.

Pat Siderman

A CHANT

Reach Out!
Enfold!
In Tribal Arms
A first born lives!

Beat a drum and
Hum - Hum - Hum
Beat a drum and
Hum - Hum - Hum!

Father whispers in first borns' ear
A name only he can hear:

"Kaume—Wise to be"
"Kaume—Wise to be"

And it has ever been so
Kaume is the first to know
Around Africa's burning flame
The destiny given in a name.

Reach Out
Enfold
In Tribal Love
A first born lives!

Beat a drum and
Hum! Hum! Hum!
Beat a drum and
Hum! Hum! Hum!

Marjorie Johnson



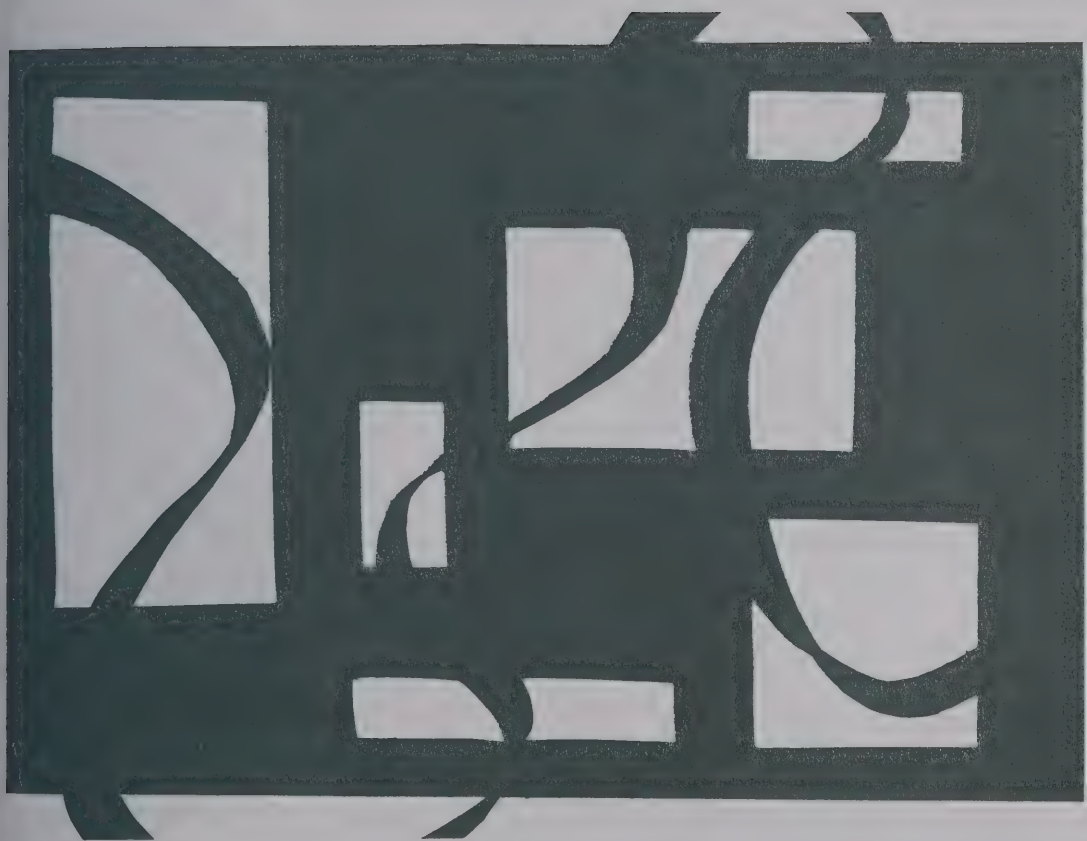
autumn afternoon

toulouse-lautrec's jane avril
reads
and i watch ten year old
girls in dance tights
black and pink
pour out of a gymnasium
onto a leafy lawn and
mothers waiting in cars

a retrieved multiple personality
glibly relates
the horror to a radio
personality
while avril
and i
stroll the midway
festooned with flags
and banners
announcing
the amazing alligator boy
and the world's oldest
homosexual
and the siamese boxing match
and other wonderful
wonders

i see red hair under
feathered hats
and plush divans
and padded cells
and rubber knives and forks
and forgotten school books
under the park bench
and a dead robin
pasted to the pavement
with its own blood
i miss by inches
on my bike

the line defines her
roman nose
subdued hues of sunsets
and distant ridges
defined
warm in memory
of long walks above
the activity
and acrid gas station
washrooms
and forgotten whores
who once were women
dick roberts, jr.



Dismay, flout thy boisterous head
Away! Flail alms and
green Ganges fruit,

amen.

Such reek
such flinth-flopplle . . .

Again the river's wet green eyes
await to meet mine
in the morning when sun angels have finished
dancing pink songs
on the virgin threshold of your eyelids.

Creampuffs and guffawing.

It's away, away
and away we go into a nebulous edge
that knocks us back and forth
so that we end up right back where we started.
It was here . . .

or here.

"No," says the Sugarplum, "Always."

And laughing voices fly away on a motorcycle dream
from yesterday

when I was a bird . . .

(was I a bird, now really?)

and why would anyone care for

whenever whomsowhichiswhat
should whatever it does

when it's supposed to

and any others, too. But that would mean

creampuffs and guffawing

or, "My, the sky's hazy!"

on late afternoons,
bipedal.

And, so, the ending. But, say,
what is written backwards on your crown?

Or shall we awake one day to find ourselves drowned
or from a passing spider dipping web into the sea
it falls on us.

So the lady dances off

chewing hay

spits us out to dry and walk away . . .

When the morning comes, you'll see—

It's day!

It's day and morning

and evening and night is no more

because sun is a jewel that's wet

and when you least expect it . . .

Ulp! . . . gottcha!

and then slips away like everybody else

to froth at sea.

It's the stars that lead better men astray
while I sit and think of sea . . .

The dark of evening
makes us say
"I wonder if it rained today?" or
"Perhaps. But, who can say
when drinking so much tea?"
But still the sea
the sea comes back from fishing.

An old man, weathered, light,
fishnet on his shoulder slung
and in his eye a glimmer of the young.
Old man, why glimmereth thine eye so?
(Screams and powderpuffs, etc.)

"that is my bedspring!!" and
sideways, knocks him flat. Rubbing
his jaw and soothing his eyes
he rises.
It is morning.
Again the sun commands
our shadows, arrayed around us,
susceptible to whim.
Many many times.
And many before.
But, 'tis no matter.
Just a trifle under the weather, I might say.
And maybe more
If given half a chance
or even three-fourths of a smatterings.
The difference comes out
that the sea has come between us.

Yes, I sing of the sea
and all else for now
leaves me
dry.

M. Sovacool



A Dream Inspired By A Stranger

A dream floated by,
And I forgot the wash on the line.
An apparition's hand
Rested lightly on my shoulder,
And pushed me gently in the direction
I never go,
And only dream of.

Whose dream keeps floating by?
Is it my dream
Or Their dream;
Society's dream
Or Your dream?

Be concrete you say.
Give us images of the dream,
So we can see it,
Taste it,
Feel it,
Smell it,
Judge it,
Laugh at it,
Worry about it.
Maybe share it?
It is thin and transparent now—ghostlike.

"I want to be."
"Be what?"
"Be more than I am."

The apparition laughs,
Puts its finger to its lips.
Yes, I know,
I talk too much,
But do I dream too much?

The dream floats out of sight.
As if by magic,
The clothes have dried on the line.
I gather up my worldly things:
Sun-warmed sheets close to my cheek.
Ah! the smell of sun-dried clothes.
A forgotten smell;
I will smell the sunshine
Until . . .

Betty Sutton

SELF IMAGERY

I've often metered out my life
to feign aloofness from that
which so corrupts me

But still the words
remain a bridge
supported by my life

The constant change
so quick to hide
with level head

confronts my eyes
Passing time is jeweled
regardless of my life

M. Sovacool

THE LIMIT OF REASON

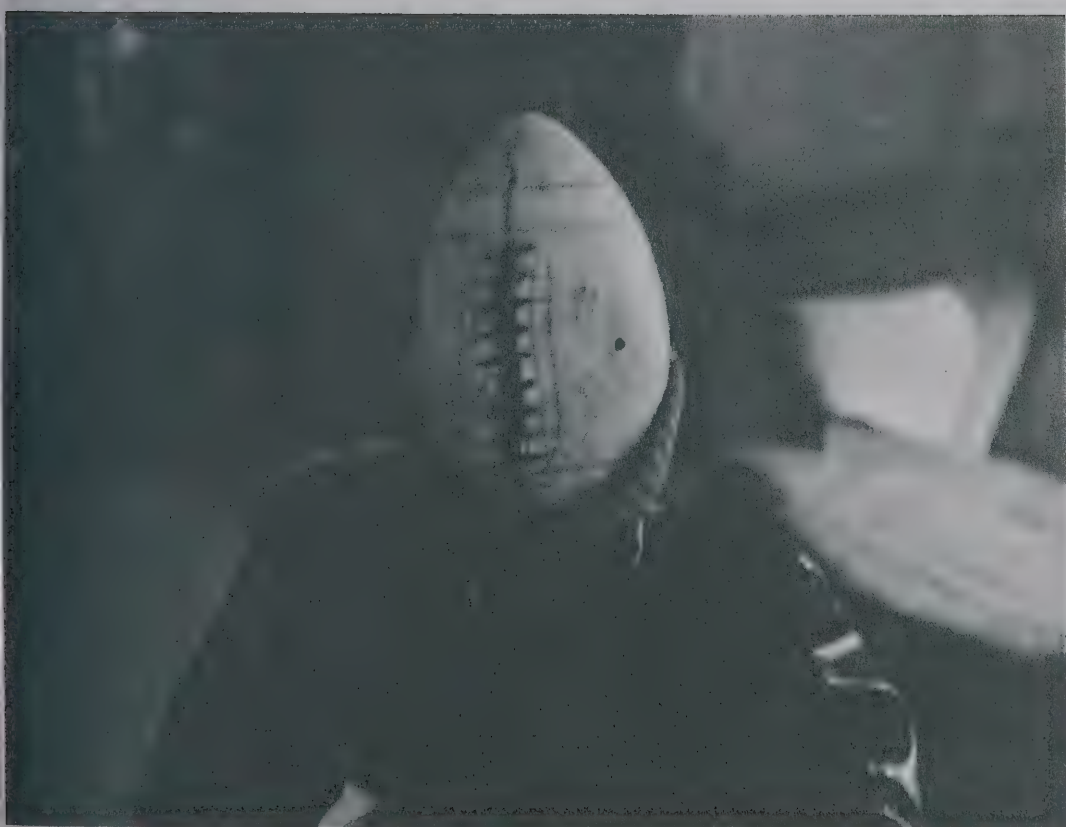
From a wobbling equilibrium
to a dilapidated haze
the crux amid confusion's lathe
is bothered to the ground

The crux of endeavor evolves as a cylinder
which spins against the lathe's
stationary blade, the palatable absolute
that the soul demands

Connived in confusion
propagation thru fear
yields a fog that decays
those endeavors which it obscures

Around the central disc eject
the spittle of defeat
so all conclusions gained secrete
venom from a misguided end

M. Sovacool



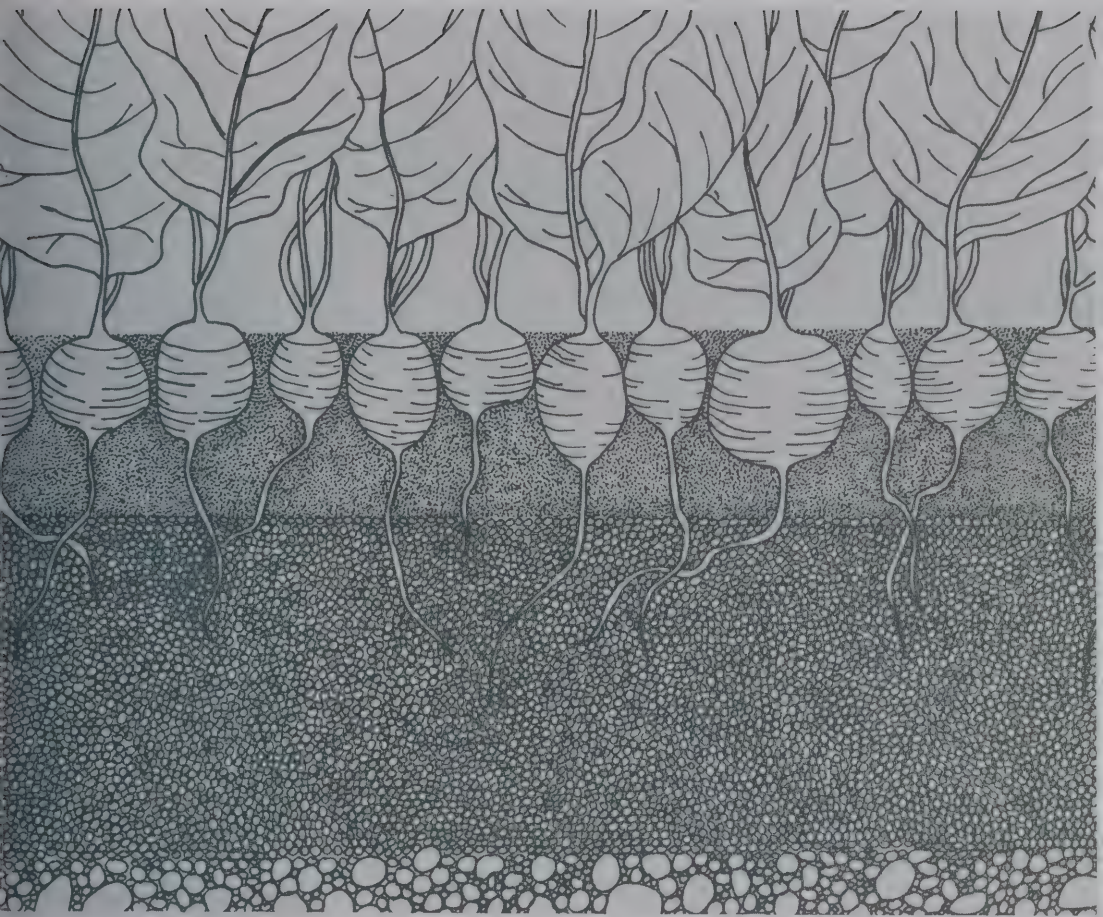
1000 Siestas

in one
waking moment
a thousand siestas,
negligably many hearts
undone
within the breast
as every dormant
single dream
departs
Joseph Sovacool

Lope de Rueda
circa 1505-1565

SONG

Red willow, my good friend,
under the young red willow.
And the two good friends
are gone and gone away
below the greeny pines
under the young red willow,
red willow, my good friend.
And the two old lovers
are gone the both of them
over the greeny fields,
under the young red willow.
Joe Sovacool



A POEM THAT MAKES SENSE

Jealousy sparks the menial
Camp of plodders, then she'll

Intrude to opine in bromides.
So it's her own ignorance she derides.

Albeit, her mind is locked,

For, if other were ever
Of such vain bearing,
Poor brute! in the mouth he'd be socked.

As sure as a jackass when she brays
Numb-er than the rock which under a glacier lays
Devoid of intellect, thus she stays.

It comes as no surprise to those aware,
Not those who see their own reflections everywhere,
Callous allegations unfounded in fact
Occlude the dimensions of any abstract
Message conveyed in a sensitive way,
Perhaps there are others with something to say.
Emancipate us all, O someone who's able!
Take out the garbage before it's back on the table!
Explant the monochrome impression that those
Nemeses of poor journalism propose
To prejudice each and all of us.

M. Sovacool



IF WISHES WERE HORSES WE'D ALL BE INSTRUCTORS

Selfimportance breeds an intolerance
which sweeps across the rote academy
Frightened knowers cowering behind sham

(learning is serious "business")

and enjoying the power of their vacuous cells
windowless, cloistered
they command impressionable spirits to adopt perditious muteness
that fulfills a selfserving intent
fostering intolerant aloofness

There is no purpose in giving credence to lies
What is accomplished by maintaining civility with a liar
To those who've acquired such insensitivity
the truth and only truth is fear

There is more to be known than is known
this at any given time
Though cumulative, is knowledge ever complete
think of utility

School is where one pays to have someone else tell one what to read
not how to read

M. Sovacool

Untitled Poem

My love—The Cloud
of a Bright Summer Day
The thin prism;
not blocking but sorting the warm
inner rays,
giving the silent blue waves
a smile with millions of floating
diamonds ablaze.
And carressing the rough body of sand
under its gaze.

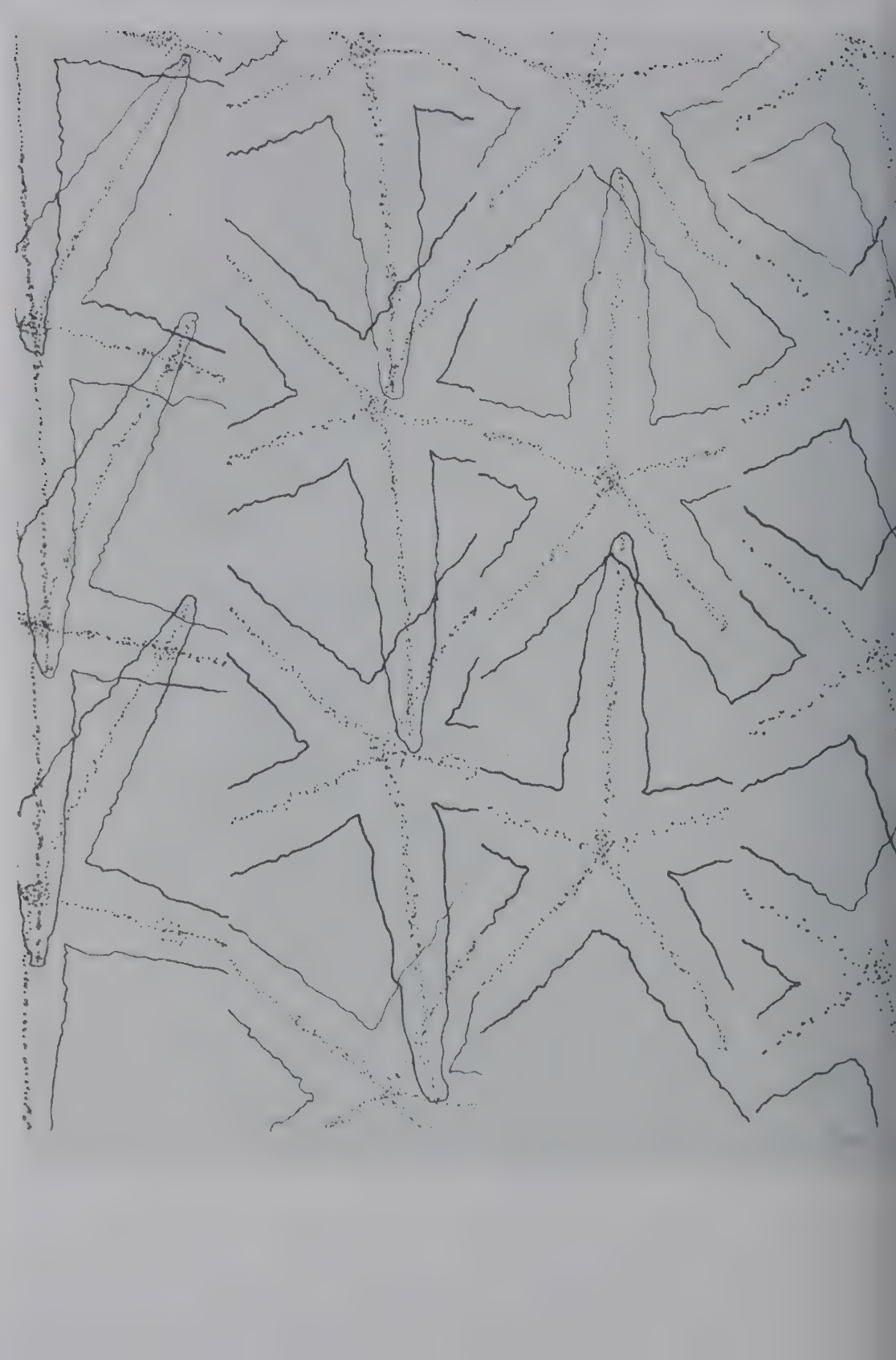
But if the omnipotent wind forces the
cloud away,
darkness will come
prostituting the sun;
and as the waves turn gray
they shall erupt,
scaring the body
with chilly cesspools
scorning
the fervent.

E. Mortimer Croom, Jr.

SURVIVAL

Survival/struggle
blackness is survival/struggle
life
is survival/struggle
black eyed peas
and ice potatoes
five days a week
is survival/struggle
sacked coal
buck a bag
for three room
shack on
ten degree day
is
survival/struggle
is lack
is life
survival/struggle is
long day, no work
nickel on 479
pint of wine
sweet muscadine
timex in pawn again
o psalm of life
thank you Jesus
for our country
tis of thee

Willie Jones



A FABLE

by David Miller

Once upon a time there was a backward place, called KRAPS, which yielded very little in the way of anything useful. As a result the residents, called STNEDUTS, were seemingly doomed to a bleak existence.

After a time, however, the starving STNEDUTS began to look elsewhere for sustenance. To their surprise they found it embodied in a group of clever creatures native to the area. These creatures, called STSITRA, needed very little to survive—just a few grains of ESIARP every now and then—but even ESIARP was limited in the land of KRAPS. The STSITRA made do with what was available, however; and soon their eggs, called SKROW became the STNEDUTS major food supply.

Everything proceeded smoothly in the land of KRAPS until one black day when a hideous, serpentine beast, called the ROTIDE of KRAPS, appeared. Even though no one was sure quite why, the evil ROTIDE harbored an intense hatred for the STSITRA. A predator by nature, the ROTIDE began to attack and to destroy the STROW of the STSITRA, knowing that eventually this would lead to the destruction of the STSITRA themselves.

As sly as she was evil, the terrible ROTIDE confined her attacks to the SKROW of the young STSITRA, realizing that because of their inexperience and immaturity, they would be easier prey. Although the horrible ROTIDE never ventured to attack the SKROW of any of the more mature STSITRA, she did confront them on occasion, but in those encounters the ROTIDE spat her venom at the entire group from afar. You see, the despicable ROTIDE of KRAPS was not only evil and sly, she was also a coward.

The irresponsible destruction of the SKROW enraged all of the STSITRA, both young and old alike. As a group they could have easily attacked and destroyed the contemptible ROTIDE of KRAPS, but destruction was against their very nature. Instead they placated their ire with the knowledge that eventually the ROTIDE'S bitterness would consume her—that eventually her evil would destroy her. Only then could the STSITRA and the STNEDUTS live happily ever after in the backward land of KRAPS.

Moral: A *backward spell* is sometimes more effective than a frontal attack.

SATURDAYS' SUMMER CIRCUS

Melting mass odors ooze
Into popcorn, crawl over pizzas
And blend into candy and pop;
Fries flirt with franks,
Malts mix with mustard
And mingle with perfume or pot.

King Coaster keeps cadence.
Sharpshooters blast
At the lucky ducky.
Babies bellow—jocks joke.
The carousel sings sweetly
'Round the roar of racing motors.
Trains toot on steaming tracks
Like trumpets starting the show:

Families of faces weep under a sweltering sun;
Dresses stick—red knees bend with the heat.
Purple pandas and pink hippos
Snuggle against dashikaed brothers and shaded girls.
Buttocks bob under panting pants of rippling flesh.
Breasts peer beneath nipped halters of cool cotton.
Tempting T-shirt “Don’t Squeeze the Charmin”
Holds hands with “If It Feels Good, Do It!”
Lavender leid lovelies flip Fawcett doos
And prance in shoes
Spinning gooey webs of melting gum.

Humans marching in the Carowinds parade . . .

Lucille Thompson

COMMUNICATION

Words fall out of my mouth
like watermelon seeds,
Hit the dead cement and turn brittle
enough to rattle.
You speak to me in little black chinquapins,
And you, in the white hair of dandelions.
Each lies there in the aching silence
of indifference.

I'd like you to catch a few of my seeds
And plant them in some rich, black dirt,
Water and tend the vines, winding them
around your arms
And letting the leaves grow through
your hair until July.
Then burst a ripe watermelon on the ground,
Gouge out its red, dripping heart
and eat it.
Listen to the juice running down your throat
and decide for yourself
If I have spoken to you.

Ann Matthews

IDENTITY

Beside myself I stand,
A shadow,
One-and-a
-shade,
Not cleft
But still not whole.

And so the tree I see
Is grotesquely bent,
The rain is spiked
With stinging ice.
The birds are all vultures.

The night beats its wings
Over my head.
With pounding heart I listen
for the dreaded footsteps
Of one who's coming.

My mirror is blank.
Shadows don't show.
But looking over my shoulder I see
A splintered horror
And I know it's me.

When I can embrace again
My penumbra;
Coalesce in holy unity,
I shall stand up whole
With my identity.

Ann Matthews

HAIKU

Autumn leaf of gold
Wind blowing over your coat
Death is imminent

Turquoise stone of blue
Mirror of the desert sky
Indian wisdom

Randy Bivens

The receding wave
Deposits an abandoned
Home upon the beach
David Miller

The fifty dollar
Eight ball rattles the pocket.
I smash my cue stick.
David Miller

“The Man Who Nurses The Plant”

I'd like to go outside and place my roots
next to a big acorn tree,
And if the day is too splendid I'd take
My pen and play shields with the sun.

I'd like to take a seed and plant it in the
ground beneath me,
And like the giver of breath hope it's
not misused by someone.

I'd like to provide water and sprinkle
the sunshine of life,
And live to see the day 'our' plant stretches
in the eye of radiance.

I'd like to ask 'Father' to help the plant
grow strong as he did this one by
supplying a second chance.
Jeffvory Alexander

each seperate tally of the morn divulges
zinc that creeps up thru the asphalt
whereas I within whom sleeps no mineral have
come upon a stealthy mistress here
 where once
 there must
 have sloped a field of rye she flits
 about between the sober brick
 and seeing
 those who pass
nearby smiles slightly
 from her nestle of the cubic stacks
 and aisles till clearly she cannot
 persuade the morning to reverse itself
 and fleeing
 to the walls enshrouded still
 awaits the day to go awry

Joseph Sovacool

The tart bright hollow strains
 of vehicle against
the curling road
 of limbs across
an armchair all
the sunbeams perched
 upon my panes
afar they fall
When long dry skies
 affirm the loss

 of cause to search
the day for dance

then best less
minor's made

J. Sovacool



now we are thirty

dick roberts, jr.

im hitting the third big zero
and i wish milne had thought
of us when we pass his verses
into life

it is crazy
it is only a phenomenon
of the calender
it has not bearing
on me
on my mental health

but i feel insignificant
like last weeks crossword
like last weeks me

my confidence shrivils
a polio hand
a dried spider
cellophane
laid on hot coals

i look for corners
and avoid the mirrors
of people

i am at low tide
with my creatures
exposed on a gray
sandy stretch

i am a lost dog
circling the field
once more
because im sure
it was the one i came through
earlier



